Case 2587

Avicula gryphaeoides J. de C. Sowerby, 1836 (Mollusca, Bivalvia): proposed conservation

Gloria Lee

Department of Geological Sciences, University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT, U.K.

Abstract. The purpose of this application is the conservation of the specific name of a fossil bivalve *Avicula gryphaeoides* J. de C. Sowerby, 1836 by the suppression of the unused senior primary homonym *Avicula gryphaeoides* Sedgwick, 1829.

---

1. Sedgwick (1829, p. 119) described (without illustration) a bivalve species of Permian age from the Magnesian Limestone of Humbleton (Durham, England) thus, 'This small species (which in external character resembles a gryphite) abounds at Humbleton. The convex valve has many very small slightly tuberculate ribs. The other valve is discoid and nearly smooth. There are several imperfect specimens of other striated species which resemble Gervillia'. This species he called *Avicula gryphaeoides.* Logan (1967, p. 18) cited J. de C. Sowerby (*in* Sedgwick, 1829) as author of *A. gryphaeoides* although there is no indication in Sedgwick's (1829) publication of any person other than Sedgwick himself naming this species.

2. Taxonomic opinion has long been that *A. gryphaeoides* Sedgwick is a junior subjective synonym of *Pseudomonotis speluncaria* Schlotheim, 1816, (e.g. Morris, 1843, p. 107 and Logan, 1967, p. 24).

3. J. de C. Sowerby (*in* Fitton, 1836, p. 156, p. 335) described a bivalve: 'The convex valve is nearly orbicular, with a projecting incurved beak, with two small unequal ears; when alone it may easily be mistaken for *Inoceramus concentricus,* but the parts about the beak, especially the ears, show the difference. The other valve is nearly flat, orbicular and has one small and one large ear'. This he identified as *Avicula gryphaeoides.* The left valve is from the Upper Greensand, Nursted, Hampshire and the right valve from the Upper Greensand, Cambridgeshire; the material from Nursted may be that identified by J. de C. Sowerby in Murchison's paper (1829, p. 99) as 'Avicula. New species not yet figured'. *A. gryphaeoides* J, de C. Sowerby, 1836 is a junior primary homonym of *A. gryphaeoides* Sedgwick, 1829.

4. However, in all the consulted works referring to the binomen *A. gryphaeoides* subsequent to 1829, with the exception of Phillips (1839, p. 190, caption to fig. 3 attributes authorship to Sedgwick) and Phillips & Daubeny (1834, p. 617, where the text reference gives the author as J. de C. Sowerby although the text accompanying pl. 3, p. 806 attributes authorship to Sedgwick), the authorship of *Avicula gryphaeoides* is attributed to J. de C. Sowerby (1836).

5. Howse (1848) and Morris (1843, 1854) were aware of the dual usage of *A. gryphaeoides.* Howse (p. 249) comments in his description of *Monotis gryphaeoides* J. de C. Sowerby (Magnesian Limestone, Durham), 'though that gentleman [Sowerby] had subsequently applied the same name to another very different shell, probably an

Inoceramus from the Greensand; see *Geol. Trans*, 2nd ser., vol. 4'. Morris (1843 & 1854) gives J. de C. Sowerby's species two entries; one (1843, p. 106) associated with the reference *Geol. Trans*, sers. 2, vol. 3, p. 119, in which he lists it as a synonym of *Avicula speluncaria*; the other (1843, p. 106 & 1854, p. 163) refers to *Geol. Trans.*, sers 2, vol. 4, from the Upper Greensand near Petersfield.

6. Since the time of Roemer (1841, p. 64, pl. 8) the binomen has been used in the J. de C. Sowerby sense. This concept of the species is deeply entrenched in both taxonomic and stratigraphic world literature (a representative list is held by the Commission Secretariat).

7. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

(1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the specific name *gryphaeoides* Sedgwick, 1829 as published in the binomen *Avicula gryphaeoides* for the purposes of both the Principle of Priority and the Principle of Homonymy;

(2) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *gryphaeoides* J. de C. Sowerby, 1836, as published in the binomen *Avicula gryphaeoides*;

(3) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *gryphaeoides*, Sedgwick, 1829, as published in the binomen *Avicula gryphaeoides* and as suppressed in (1) above.

References

Fitton, H. 1836. Observations on some strata between the chalk of the Oxford Oolite in South East England. *Transactions of the Geological Society, London*, ser. 2, **4**: 103–378.

Howse, R. 1848. A Catalogue of the fossils of the Permian System of the Counties of Northumberland and Durham. *Transactions of the Tyneside Naturalists' field club*, **1**: 219–264.

Logan, A. 1967. Permian Bivalves of Northern England. *Palaeontographical Society (Monograph)* 72 pp. Palaeontographical Society of London.

Morris, J. 1843. *Catalogue of British Fossils*. Edition 1, 222 pp. J. van Voorst, London.

Morris, J. 1854. *Catalogue of British Fossils*. Edition 2, 372 pp. J. Morris, London.

Murchison, R. I. 1829. Geological sketches of the North-Eastern extremity of Sussex, and the adjoining parts of Hants. and Surrey. *Transactions of the Geological Society, London*, ser. 2, **2**: 97–108.

Phillips, J. 1839–41. *D. Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopedia, Treatise on Geology*. Vol. 1, edition 2, 334 pp. Longman, Orme, Brown, Green and Longman, London.

Phillips, J. & Daubeny, C. G. B. 1834. *Encyclopedia Metropolitana*. Vol. 4 (Geology) 800 pp. Baldwin & Craddock, London.

Roemer, F. A. 1841. *Die Versteinerungen des nord–deutschen Kreidegebirges*. 145 pp. E. Lieferung, Hannover.

Schlotheim, E. F. von. 1820. *Die Petrefactenkunde auf ihrem jetzigen Standpunkte durch die Beschriebung seiner Sammlung versteinerter und fossiler uberreste des Thier-und Pflanzerreichs der Vorwelt erlautert*. 437 pp.

Sedgwick, A. 1829. On the geological relations and internal structure of the Magnesian Limestone, and the lower positions of the New Red Sandstone Series in their range through Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Yorkshire and Durham. *Transactions of the Geological Society, London*, ser. 2, **3**: 35–124.